

POCAHONTAS TIMES.

This Paper is Devoted Especially to the Interests of the Farming Class.

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MARLINTON, WEST VIRGINIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1893.

\$1.50 PER ANNUM

\$10,000

will be paid for a recipe enabling us to make WOLFF'S ACME BLACKING at such a price that the retailer can profitably sell it at 10c. a bottle. At present the retail price is 20c.

This offer is open until January 1st, 1893. For particulars address the undersigned.

ACME BLACKING is made of pure alcohol, other liquid dressings are made of water. Water costs nothing. Alcohol is dear. Who can show us how to make it without alcohol so that we can make ACME BLACKING as cheap as water dressing, or put it in fancy packages like many of the water dressings, and then charge for the outside appearance instead of charging for the contents of the bottle?

WOLFF & RANDOLPH, Philadelphia.

PIK-RON

is the name of a paint of which a 5c. bottle is enough to make six scratched and dented cherry chairs look like newly finished mahoganis. It will do many other remarkable things which no other paint can do. All retailers sell it.

Official Directory of Pocahontas County.

Judge of Circuit Court, A. N. Campbell.
Prosecuting Attorney, L. M. McClintic.
Sheriff, J. C. Arbogast.
Deputy Sheriff, Geo. W. Callison.
Clk Co. Court, S. L. Brown.
Clk Cr. Court, J. H. Patterson.
Assessor, C. O. Arbogast.

Com'rs (Ab. Ct. (C. E. Board.
G. M. Kee.
Amos Barlow.
Geo. Baxter
Geo. P. Moore.

THE COURTS.

Circuit Court convenes on the first Tuesday in April, 3rd Tuesday in June and 3rd Tuesday in October.

County Court convenes on the 1st Tuesday in January, March, October and second Tuesday in July July is levy term.

N. C. McNEIL,
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW.

Will practice in the Courts of Pocahontas and adjoining Counties, and in the Court of Appeals of the State of West Virginia.

L. M. McCLINTIC,
Attorney-at-Law,
Huntersville, W. Va.

Will practice in the courts of Pocahontas and adjoining counties and in the Supreme court of Appeals.

H. S. RUCKER,
Atty.-at-Law & Notary Public,
Huntersville, W. Va.

Will practice in the courts of Pocahontas county and in the Supreme court of Appeals.

J. W. ARBUCKLE,
Attorney-at-Law,
Lewisburg, W. Va.

Will practice in the courts of Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties. Prompt attention given to claims for collection in Pocahontas county.

W. A. BRATTON,
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW,
Huntersville, W. Va.

Prompt and careful attention given to all legal business.

D. O. J. CAMPBELL,
DENTIST,
Monterey, Va.

Will visit Pocahontas County, at least, twice a year.

The exact date of his visits will appear in this paper.

D. J. N. WEYMOUTH,
RESIDENT DENTIST,
Beverly, W. Va.

Will visit Pocahontas County every Spring and Fall. The exact date of each visit will appear in THE TIMES.

J. M. CUNNINGHAM, M. D.,
PHYSICIAN & SURGEON,
Has located at Marlinton. All calls promptly answered.
Office in the Skiles house.

J. B. McNEILL,
AUCTIONEER,
BUCKEYE, W. VA.

Four miles below Marlinton. Business of this kind attended to anywhere in the State. Good references.

A Story of Elk River.

A New Englander gives an account of a summer on Elk River, and tells of seeing that species of duck which nests in a hollow tree overlooking the water. Anyone accustomed to being along the river has seen them with their big red heads attending their young so closely, and leading their enemies along by appearing disabled, as many land birds do, until deep water is reached. We have seen them in a tree and have seen them drop down as easily and swiftly as a kingfisher. This we are willing to swear to may be. There is something in the mighty hunter, an Irishman, who shot ducks which were roosting in a tree. The story may interest those familiar with Elk River and some may know the writer Charles McIlvaine.

The old story ran something in this way: A little chicken was peeping under a rosebush to see how such beautiful flowers were made. A rose leaf fluttered down upon it, and the frightened chick scurried off to its mother with the alarming report that the skies were falling.

My story reverses this for it tells how ducks fell from the skies; and if roses had been peeping about, they must have been the ones to have a fright.

One May morning I was trolling for black bass on Elk River, one of the most bewitching of streams, where it elbows itself by quick rushes, through the heart of West Virginia's mountains.

By rocks and drift stack, where eel grass floated over watery pockets, or flags held aloft their two edged leaf swords over, irised shallows, as body-guard to some invisible river nixie; where dark for ests of fir-like bitterworts awayed in the lazy pools, there the bass lay, fixed and motionless, as though imbedded in solid crystal.

Neither the enticement of gaudy flies nor tempting morsels of live bait, stirred them to more than knowing eyewinkles.

It must have been a fast day with them; or perhaps information had reached them in some mysterious way that a particularly dangerous fisherman was coming, with all the allurements of the craft.

At any rate they would not bite. So I rowed my cedar skiff in the shadow of an over hanging birch, and settled myself comfortably in it to watch quietly and enjoy what was going on about resolved to have as much patience as a fish, and knowing well that I could tell when feeding time began, by the leaps of the frightened minnows from their ravenous pursuers.

No one with eyes and ears need be lonely, even in the loneliest of places. Some bird or animal insect or plant will be ever busy at its interesting life work, from which strange bits of knowledge can silently stolen for the observer's store.

Up the trunk of the friendly birch a procession of snails with their curled up houses on their backs, were journeying to found a small town somewhere; or perhaps the branches of the tree was their mountain resort and they were off for a summer jaunt.

"What an advantage to be able run out ones eyes and send them on an exploring expedition as does a snail! What would be saved if one had no legs to ache from climbing, or if he carried his breathing apparatus on his back carefully housed against all danger of taking

cold."

A splash in the water disturbed the stillness. "Aha! You could not wait much longer, some winged bait has proved too much for your patience." I mentally exclaimed to the bass. But no bass made those rings a hundred feet or more from me; the bulging swirl was wanting. Something had fallen in the stream.

As if by magic, a tiny, downy duck popped up, fluttered its stubby wings, shook its miniature head and sent sparkling pellets of water flying in every direction as it bobbed and scooped and paddled upon the surface.

Surely it was what had made the splash. Where could it have come from? Had it dropped from the sky? Was it raining ducks?

I remembered that I had been told in my childhood that when it snowed, an old woman who lived up among the clouds was picking her geese. Did she keep ducks, too, and had a youngster slipped through her fingers?

As I wonderingly watched the pretty creature, there was another splash. Instantly a second ducklet appeared in the centre of sparkling wave rings, where it paddled and dove with the grace, skill and calm demeanor of a long-experienced waterman.

The two eyed each other a moment in comical surprise, just as if they were saying, "Hello! how did you get here?" Then they bobbed a merry recognition.

A third soon fell to join the swimmers. If bits of the sky had fallen they would not have puzzled me more.

But there are reasons for all things, and most human beings are not as easily deceived as chickens. I began to look about for a likely starting place from whence could come the shower of ducks.

Directly over where the little fellows were sporting, leaned the white trunk of a hollow sycamore or plane-tree. About twenty-five feet from the water a large branch, with a great, black hole in it, stood over the stream, resembling the spout of an immense pump.

Something moved in the yawning opening. A feathery ball, with a fluffy neck and a diminutive head with wide open protesting bill, was thrust from it, held firmly in the air by a wing in the beak of some larger bird, just visible behind it. Then its captor poised it for a moment, took a hasty glance below to see if the way was clear, and dropped it.

The duckling's stubby wings closed tightly to its body. Down it shot, head foremost, struck the water, and disappeared in it, to pop up again quickly, sprightly as an angling cork.

Seven more ducklings followed it at short intervals. Evidently the mother duck was turning her children out of doors; yet not in anger, for as she loosened her hold on each, she cocked her pretty head to one side, and kept her under eye upon her departing child until she saw it happily congratulated upon its lucky tumble by the merry group beneath.

Only once did the mother bird leave her retreat. Then she came out boldly, without pausing, and stood upon the opening. In her bill she held one of her children by the wing.

By rapid strokes of her own pinions she circled close to the river's surface, and gently dropping her feathered child as she flew, left it in safety with its comrades. Was

this her pet? Was it her latest born, or was it crippled from its birth, and likely to be injured by such a fall?

What a jollification there was among the young navigators! They swam, splashed, dove, stood upon their webbed feet, flapped their tiny wings, preened themselves, joined in lively chases, or sat in ludicrous contemplation of their new surroundings.

At the least sound they huddled quickly together, or pointed their sharp tails toward the sky and were gone under the water in a twinkling, remaining under for a remarkable length of time. One by one they cautiously, and, as courage came, resumed their gambolings. "What kind of duck is this that tunnels her home in a tree-top and nests her family there?" I asked myself.

The question was soon answered. After all the ducklings had been ejected and unmercifully soused, the old duck flew up the river for a short distance, evidently on a scout, and settled in the water. Soon I saw her swimming cautiously back, closely eyeing the water's edge and bank for any sign of danger.

What a beautiful creature she was! so neatly dappled about neck and breast; her wings banded with a dark green, rich and lustrous as the finest satin; her shapely head, resplendent with irised colors and striped with velvety white, poised gracefully; her lines more perfect than those of a racing yacht; every fibre of her plumage preened to exquisite exactness.

She was the beautiful Summer Duck (*Anas sponsa*), the handsomest of her kind.

When quite near to her dabbling brood, she left the river's open and swam into a cluster of rushes, where she sat quietly looking at them for a while, as if fearing to attract attention to their whereabouts by joining them. Presently I heard a low call. Every busy head stood still in quick attention. Another call; and instantly, without a check of hesitancy, twenty little paddles plied the water vigorously, carrying ten "propelling ducklings to their mother's side."

For the Times.

The Haunted House.

Adventure is pleasant but excess of it may be unpleasant and one of my adventures proved to be of the latter sort. One sultry afternoon during the war-days when any part of the Confederacy was home I picked up a little girl cousin of mine and we set forth for a summer ramble. Leaving the city of Richmond we crossed the James River and found ourselves on the Manchester side: it was in Manchester that I was born and may be some natural gravity drew me there to test the courage mettle in me. At the outset I would say, that for many years there was standing on this opposite shore from Richmond and quite visible from the upper city, a fine, large and utterly deserted brick building which bore the unenviable distinction of being haunted. Well furnished without and within, its roomy apartments, antique halls, frescoed ceilings, marble mantels, mahogany banisters and lovely view of the James River, just here interrupted in its course by innumerable little islands on which trees and grass grew and where wild flowers ran riot,—all this failed to keep any occupant long there. Death after death occurred, and family after family moved off silently until rent free failed to bring a bidder for the haunted house. Nan and I wandered at our

own sweet will on the river banks gathering flowers and mosses, and casting furtive glances at the weird building which loomed sullenly above us and which we had no desire to enter though open hall door seemed to invite us. Little did we know that night time would lodge us there unwillingly. A sudden clouding of the sky, there burst on us with hardly a moment's notice such a storm of wind and rain and lightning as to well nigh deprive earth of sunlight and us two forlorn wanderers of senses. Clutching Nan's arm and kissing the timid child for reassurance to us both, I hurried to the haunted house. "Oh! auntie!" as she always called me said the terrified child, for what Richmonder old or young, did not feel some awe of this mysterious building. "Come!" was all the word of my mother tongue, that my lips could utter and mid the darkness made more terrible by the fierce, death bearing flashes, we groped about the immense front hall for the door to some apartment. The high ceilings, the wainscoted, walls, the rich and massive trimmings, defying time, of the wide naked, bare room now cold and damp as the storm outside decreased impressed us silently. We were at length sheltered from the drenching rain and the storm that bowed the great trees around us.

I improvised a bed for the child and soothed her to sleep, then smiled grimly at the strange and unexpected ending of my afternoon ramble. I withdrew myself into a small recess of the room and prepared for a night watch as I could not sleep in that room. What did I care for ghosts! There were no such things anyway. The midnight hour must be near. A moaning sound—perhaps the great chimney, no, a human moan, a tremor, a shudder seized me, and then a sudden boldness. I must find the source of that unearthly moan. Nan slept as little children sleep. Groping thro' numerous halls and rooms, up and down great stairways that gave back each foot fall sound to me, making me afraid of myself, forgetful that I might find it difficult to retrace my steps, I still came no nearer that dreadful sound. Ye! A word. Listen! "Dead, dead, and gone to the other world!" Surely in this nook I shall find some one. But no. Then a song or snatches of one most familiar at the time and heard yet occasionally, "Lorena." The voice was soft and clear but where was its possessor? After the song was the refrain of that sad and painful moan. Now thoroughly alarmed and prepared for the first time to believe all the monstrous ghost stories I had ever heard and to put mine at their head. I groped back to the sleeping Nan nor left her again through that long night of moans, incoherent words and gentle singing. I did not wonder that the haunted house was out of market for demand; I even wondered that the owner did not pull it down brick by brick and the ghostly voice depart. When the welcome morning dawned Nan and I made a more successful search, and in an out of the way corner of the lowest story we found a poor, suffering soldier who had escaped and crawled into this house, there uttering his wild unconscious ravings, first in song and then in groans. It is needless to add that help was soon dispatched to convey our poor harmless ghost to fitter quarters than the Haunted House on the banks of the James River.

A. L. P.